

DETAILED NARRATIVE

**ROBERT WOODWARD SHOOTING
DECEMBER 2, 2001
ALL SOULS CHURCH
BRATTLEBORO, VT**

September 24, 2002

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WOODWARD ASKED FOR SANCTUARY

Robert Woodward was extremely out of breath when he arrived at the All Souls Unitarian Church in Brattleboro, Vermont a little before 10:00 on the morning of December 2, 2001. He went to the podium, breathing heavily, and said repeatedly, "I'm here, I got here, I'm here. I'm glad I've gotten here." He produced a small bag and dropped it on the podium, and according to Donna Payne "it had something heavy or hard in it because it made a noise on the podium and then he had two pieces of paper ... and he kept looking over those. And he said I just want to tell you who I am."

He spoke in frantic tones, which some described as "pressured speech" and others as "ranting and raving," saying that he was going to be tortured. He calmed down enough to address the crowd, yet several people recall that he was still presenting his thoughts in a disordered manner. Iain Worth recalls that he said "Shut up."

Woodward said he thought the room was hot, and he took off his sweatshirt and threw it on the ground. He was sweating, and "huffing and puffing."

He said repeatedly that he had a statement that he needed to read. He was vehement about his urgent need to read it. Janis Chaillou reports that after several repetitions of this, the congregation indicated, "We'll listen, we'll listen"

Chaillou continues, "He calmed down slightly when he was able to read his statement. He kept taking deep breaths and reading his statement. That was about the calmest the whole time."

He proceeded to explain that his name was Robert (some recall that he said Bob) Woodward, that his friends called him Woody, and that the congregants could call him Woody. He stated his date of birth and his birthplace. He said that he worked with kids, with handicapped or troubled adolescents. He said he had lived and worked as an activist in Amherst Mass, and currently lived in Bellows Falls, Vermont. "He said he didn't do drugs, didn't drink," recalled Janis Chaillou.

He explained in a state of great agitation that his life was under threat from the CIA. He also indicated that there might be other government and military entities involved in these threats against him. He said he was "in danger," that he had received direct threats of bodily harm, and that he was there to ask for sanctuary.

He went on to state that he had been working as an environmental activist but his work had "not been in enough isolation." He spoke about how he was an advocate of fuel conservation, and emphasized "the need for an automobile that would use less fuel."

Norman Hunt recalled that Woodward said that he had "developed an engine that was arousing the opposition of car manufacturers."

He urged the parishioners to contribute to environmental activism, communicating this partly through his verbal statements, and partly through a series of blank checks from his checking account, on which he had written a series of messages. He came out from behind the podium to distribute these checks to the seated parishioners. The checks exhorted them to "get out and vote," to "work for peace," and "protect the environment." "Save Fuel, Save the environment," read a few. One check suggested that people create "Bumper stickers reading Be Patriotic, Run for Office, Be Patriotic, Burn

Less Fuel.” Another said “The Unitarians should create and promote a national network of buyers, co-ops for energy efficient vehicles.”

The checks pleaded for his statements to be shared with all Unitarians: “Take my written messages and share them with others.” “Please have my personal statement read from the pulpit of every Unitarian church.” He also asked people to memorize what he’d written on the checks.

Some of the checks had starker messages: ““I have received threats of death, torture, harm to friends and family and arrest on trumped up charges from the CIA.” And “Help, Please.”

After handing out the checks, he returned to the podium. Michael Italia recalls that he “put his head on the pulpit for about five seconds, and then abruptly straightened up, while taking deep breaths.”

“He was close to breaking down, crying,” recalls Robert MacLean. “He stopped at one point to take a breath and collect himself.”

One parishioner recalls that Woodward’s initial attempt to inform the congregation about his environmental beliefs was soon eclipsed by his terror. “He seemed to stress the environment, working for that, but the next breath, and this took over, he said he had been threatened, he received phone calls, the police were after him, going to be tortured, and then he went on and on.”

The minister and various other congregants approached him, requesting that he stop interrupting their planned service, and suggesting that he move to another room with some of them.

“Every time someone tried to get him to do something, he would wave his hands like, no, no, no I have to keep talking. I have to keep talking. I have to do this. I have to do this.” Recalls Janis Chaillou.

Robert MacClean agrees, stating that Woodward’s response to people approaching him was “no, no, I’m going to do what I’m going to do. You have to listen. And he wouldn’t shut up. He just was very determined that he was going to have his say.”

Tommy Thomas approached him, and recalled that Woodward’s response was “I don’t know this man, who are you?” “When I first approached him, he actually backed away,” Thomas said.

While he had been declaring that his life was in danger throughout his presentation, he now began to speak in more detail about the threats he said he’d been receiving. His tone was still one of intense agitation and terror, which many people interpreted as mental illness, as psychosis or paranoid schizophrenia.

Heidi Bredfeldt perceived that Woodward himself was aware that his mind was disordered.” He kept saying this is a sanctuary and I want you to help me. Which was very appealing, very sad cause he knew he was not totally with it.”

Mary Treat, however, said that she did not think he was mentally ill. She thought something had happened that had caused him to snap.

“He was being threatened in all kinds of ways by people that wanted to kill him or torture him,” Treat recalls, “and they would spell out the kind of torture, which he didn’t spell out, and he was asking us for sanctuary as a Unitarian Church.”

Robert Treat concurs: "The implication we got was because of his activism... he was on somebody's list and they were out to get him and he used the word torture quite often."

Janis Chaillou recalls that Woodward said he'd been "receiving threats of bodily harm, electric shocks, for his activities, by CIA."

Donna Payne remembers that Woodward said "They're going to assassinate me, I've already been followed, threatened..."

"He'd been getting threatening calls," Phyllis Woodring says, "He said he had been threatened for torture, to be tortured... And he named all these people, I remember he said Bob Marley, these people had been killed by the CIA and it looked like cancer but they had been killed by the CIA."

Other parishioners also recalled that he mentioned George Harrison in this context. "There seemed to be a definite source for those threats, like the military, CIA, Ecological Activism and something about George Harrison," states Iain Worth.

Woodward declared that he had been offered a job by the CIA. "He said that they were after him, that they were going to get him, they offered him a job, and that he really needed help and this was a sanctuary," remembers Heidi Bredfeldt.

Jane Worley states, "(He said) that now the CIA wanted him to work with them. He proceeded to tell us different plots that were being planned.... 'I've been a peace activist and work in the environment, now they (the CIA) want me to join them.'"

Although Woodward had made no threatening moves or statements towards the congregation, some became increasingly concerned for their safety due to Woodward's extremely agitated state. Michael Italia observed that Woodward was "using some offensive language, swear words interspersed with what he was saying."

Iain Worth noted that "The man said something about torture and death while the children were still in the room."

A few congregants left the sanctuary leading the children, and several others straggled out as well. But when the minister asked the entire congregation to "to get up and leave, and proceed to the smaller chapel," recalls Michael Italia, "he immediately shouted no, and out of nowhere produced a knife which he held up pointed towards his right eye with his right hand."

"Many left quietly and he did not react," says Charles Tummino, "until one of our members shouted for everyone to leave, at which time he took a knife from his pocket and threatened to kill himself if people left."

Jane Worley recalls, "They actually stood up and they said some of us are going to leave now because you are scaring us, and with that he took a knife out of his right front pants pocket and he pointed it to his right eye, and said "Don't do that, please don't do that. Otherwise I'm going to kill myself."

"He said you gotta stay, You got to help me. Don't come close, and that's when he pulled out... pulled out his knife," says Heidi Bredfeldt.

Robert Treat remembers that "He said don't leave, stay here, you are my witness. It was very important to him that bodies were in their seats, paying attention to him."

Janis Chaillou recalls, "He kept saying he needed to read his statement and we needed to be his collective witnesses."

WOODWARD DID NOT THREATEN THE MEMBERS OF THE CONGREGATION

The presence of a knife, which had a blade measuring just over three inches long, alarmed some people, one of whom felt that it was "very menacing looking," but did not perturb others. One man described it as "the kind of knife you would use to cut an orange."

However, all the witnesses agree that he did not threaten anyone but himself with the knife. Adelbert Ames says, "He wasn't expressing his paranoia against anyone in the room. He never threatened anyone but himself with the knife."

"He never threatened anyone but himself," maintains Polly Wilson, "He said they are going to torture me, but he never threatened anyone. That I'm sure of."

"I would say 3/4 of the time it was without the knife," Robert Treat says, "He only did that at a point where he felt threatened himself by our not doing what he wanted us to do, or something."

Heidi Bredfeldt recalls, "He didn't act like he was going to hurt anybody, other than himself. He didn't say, 'well I'm going to kill you' He wasn't a person who had that in him... I mean, I was a little concerned about it, but he didn't look like a kid that would ever hurt a fly, you know."

Robert MacLean's recollection of Woody's non-threatening stance had a troubling overtone, however. "He was trying to convince us that he would be no threat to us. 'I vow to be no threat, ah... to anyone in this building, Ah... on... well something along the lines unless you betray me and call the police in or something, you know.'" It should be noted, however, that no one else recalled Woodward saying something of this nature.

Nonetheless, many in the congregation were upset by the threats of suicide, and wondered what might be next. Heidi Bredfeldt says that the knife's emergence caused her fear: "I had no clue, what else did he have with him, if he had a knife, what else did he have?"

Jane Worley had the same thought: "I remember thinking at one point, what might... what else might he pull out of his pants pocket?"

"He was never going to hurt other people," Sherry Manning agrees, "but people were traumatized by the emotional effect of it all... He was going to hurt himself, which was not pleasant to be around."

"He never threatened to kill us," says Jane Worley, "But he said he would kill himself."

Worley approached Woodward and let him know that he was scaring people with his knife. He then apologized and put the knife away, continuing to beg people to remain in the sanctuary and bear witness to what might transpire.

"I just said 'This is an act of aggression you're really scaring people' and he apologized and said 'OK, I'm putting away the knife.'... He said something like, you know, 'No, I don't want to hurt you. I'm not going to hurt you.' And actually, that seemed believable," recalls Worley.

"Someone from the congregation said 'please put the knife away, you're scaring us.' I mean he was very polite, you know, and he actually did," recalls Sherry Manning.

"He apologized for scaring people," Jane Worley relates, "and he said when you're under... that he needed to take desperate action but, "I feel justified because such drastic action has been taken against me.""

Phyllis Woodring says she was surprised when she later learned that some in the church were very frightened and hysterical.

"I didn't feel that anybody was really scared," Sherry Manning concurs. "I mean, they were nervous, or apprehensive, but not scared of their physical well being at that point. People weren't panicking, people didn't seem upset or really scared at this point. ... It was amazing the way people were listening to him. They didn't get up and leave. They were engaged in it."

It wasn't like that, there wasn't a lot of panic," Donna Payne says, "There was more distress, you know, confusion."

"I was not afraid for myself, but for him," Mary Treat says, "I never at any point felt any danger for my own life."

"There was no threatening done," Norman Hunt remembers, "None of us felt physically threatened, anyway. It's just that our service was being interrupted."

Days later, Hunt wrote, in a letter he voluntarily penned to the Brattleboro Police, "I did not see him at any time point it in any other direction, nor did he make any threatening remarks or gestures. He was asking for help. That was his sole message. He was asking us for help."

Mary Hunt agrees with her husband, "He never once said he was going to hurt anybody else, he said 'I'm going to kill myself.' I do know that he never once was going to do anything to anybody else."

THE POLICE WERE CALLED

While Woodward was reading his statement, one of the people to exit the sanctuary was church President Charles Butterfield. Several congregants had mutually decided that calling the police would be an appropriate course of action. He left the sanctuary and called 911 from a church office telephone, and was put in touch with Dispatcher Renee White.

White asked Butterfield if Woodward, referred to as "the subject," was doing anything threatening, to which he replied, "Yes, he's talking, he's preaching... Gibberish."

White asked "Does he have any weapons on him?"

At that point, Butterfield replied, "I don't think he has any weapons on him, no."

White told Butterfield to stay on the line, and she alerted the patrol units, "An unwanted subject inside near the sanctuary, talking incoherently, believed to have no weapons on him."

Patrol Unit 26, Officer Terrence Parker, radioed that he and Unit 54, Officer William Davies, would "go out there and deal with that."

White then returned to Butterfield. He informed her that there were 60-70 people at the church. Then he said "The minister has just come in to say if someone can come in plain, plain clothes, it might be better, because this guy..."

White interjected, "We don't have anyone in plain clothes to do that."

Butterfield went on, "He's talking about being threatened by the police, so he will be quite upset when he sees you in uniform, I think."

The only portion of Reverend Mero's and President Butterfield's appeal for a plainclothes officer that White relayed to the patrol units was this: "The subject is indicating that he's upset with the police, that he's been threatened by them. Just so you're aware." No further references were made to plain clothes.

It was at that point that Unit 76, Officer Marshall Holbrook, got on the radio and offered to "go too." In his interview, Holbrook stated that "there was an update that he was becoming threatening to people. So I thought at that time, it would be advisable if I went too." But close inspection of the 911 transcripts reveals that it was after the announcement that "he is upset with the police," but before any mention of Woodward "threatening" that Holbrook announced his intention to "head up too."

White asked Butterfield if anyone in the congregation knew Woodward, and was told that no one did. Butterfield asked another congregant to "stick your head in there and see if the guy's still going on?"

A moment later, Butterfield reported, "Yes, okay, the guy is making threats now."

White queried, "To the people?"

"Okay, to the people," replied Butterfield.

"To the public?" asked White.

"Maybe we should move everybody out?" replied Butterfield, and then he spoke to the congregant that was with him: "Yes, why don't you do that, Just ask them to leave the room."

"Is he carrying any bags of any type?" asked White.

"I couldn't see any paraphernalia with him, no," Butterfield answered.

White radioed the patrol units, "Okay, apparently he's now making threats towards the congregation. There are 60 to 70 people in the building. Believed to have no weapons, not carrying anything."

Butterfield continued to report, "Okay he's now screaming. I hope they, they should be... good, good, alright, everyone's leaving the building, but he's still screaming."

White asked "He's still screaming?"

"He's very paranoid," replied Butterfield.

"Is he following them, or just..." asked White.

"No he's not following them, I don't think. He's staying in the..."

White instructed Butterfield to monitor the situation and stay on the line with her.

"Okay, now he's threatening to kill himself."

“Okay, but he has nothing that you can see?” asked White.

“I didn’t see any kind of weapon or anything,” Butterfield replied. “Oh, he DOES have a knife. Tom says... Tom... Tom says he has a knife.”

White responded, “He has a knife? Is he SHOWING it? Dispatch all units responding, subject is threatening his own self now and they are saying he DOES have a knife.”

Patrol unit 26, Officer Terrance Parker, responded, “Okay, great, would you ask them, um, to empty the building please? Ask the person there, see if they can do that.”

White asked Butterfield if the people were still leaving, and reported to the patrol unit that his reply was affirmative.

Officer Parker asked if anyone knew the subject’s name and was told that they did not. “Negative, it is not known to anyone there,” replied White.

White asked Parker if they wanted fire and rescue “to stage.” He replied yes, have them “stage at station 2.”

White then told Butterfield, “Okay, the officers are there. They’re outside the building. Okay.” White again asked Butterfield if everyone was out of the sanctuary, and again encouraged him to “have them leave. ... Those that CAN, should. Get completely away from him.”

“Here comes the... here comes an officer,” replied Butterfield.

It is troubling to note the lack of information that was conveyed, both from the church to the dispatch, and from the dispatch to the patrol units. President Butterfield, in relying on another congregant to relay information to him about what was going on in the sanctuary, seems to have been under the misapprehension, even before he was aware of the knife, that Woodward was threatening people. Butterfield failed to query Tom Baehr, his source of information, for a detailed understanding of Woodward’s stance.

The dispatcher, Renee White, when told that Woodward was threatening to kill himself with a knife, failed to ask Butterfield if he was threatening the congregants with the knife. She only asked if he was showing it. Nor did Butterfield attempt to learn more about Woodward’s stance with the knife. He did accurately report that Woodward was threatening himself, but between him and the dispatcher, the impression was allowed to be given to the police that Woodward was threatening people with a knife.

Finally, White failed to relay to the police officers that the minister had requested a plain clothes officer because the sight of a uniform was going to be upsetting to the subject. She merely let them know that the subject was “upset with the police.”

Nor at any time did Butterfield attempt to communicate that Woodward had asked for sanctuary in the church, and White did not at any time ask if anyone had any idea why the subject was in the church.

The police arrived on the scene in full regalia, having been informed that an unidentified man who had a problem with the police was preaching gibberish and threatening 60-70 people with a knife. In fact, Woodward had taken great pains to identify himself and explain why he was there, had clearly asked for sanctuary from the government and, by all accounts, had threatened no one with a knife except himself.

THE CONGREGATION TRIED TO HELP

A number of parishioners voluntarily remained in the sanctuary after Woodward first threatened suicide, although some members continued to leave. At the time of the shooting, there were eighteen people in the sanctuary. A single witness remained because of handicaps impeding her movement. Some say they stayed because they didn't want Woodward to harm himself or others. But some say they chose to remain because they wanted to help him.

"I don't know why I didn't leave," says Mary Treat, "but I wasn't afraid, and I kept thinking someone should help him and get out of this stage and get out of there safely to somewhere he could be helped."

"I wasn't in the least frightened, but I was just afraid he might do himself harm and I might be needed," said Phyllis Woodring, an M.D.

"I stayed cause I thought I was helpful to this sick guy," says Adelbert Ames.

Polly Wilson volunteered to stay as well. "I was not in the slightest disturbed by this man. I saw that he was very very paranoid and upset. And someone came and said 'do you want to leave' and I said 'No I'll stay here.'"

After Woodward put the knife back into his pocket, he began again to plead for sanctuary in the church. "He said he was seeking sanctuary in this sanctuary. He kept repeating it over and over again," says Janis Chaillou.

He explained that his choice of the Unitarian Church was not a random one. "He said he knew other Unitarians and he really felt we were the ones to help him," recalls Mary Treat.

"He said he came to the Unitarians because he knew Unitarians in Connecticut and Massachusetts, and he knew this was where he could come for asylum," says Donna Payne.

The fact that Woodward so emphasized that he wanted the Unitarian Church in particular to protect him from persecution made Mary Hunt wonder if he was aware of the church's previous involvement with granting sanctuary to persecuted Central Americans in the 1980's. "In fact we did have in the church from about '84 to '94, we were a sanctuary for a husband and wife from El Salvador. They did not stay at the church. We provided a place for them to live, and eventually had about ten refugees from El Salvador. Now whether he had ever heard anything about that, I don't know."

He again emphasized that "he felt he was being pursued all the time and he didn't want to leave the building," Mary Treat says. "I just can not leave here, I am in danger."

Treat says that he tried at that point to convince people that he was a worthy candidate for protection, that he would act to protect himself from then on. "He pleaded for sanctuary by saying he'd never rile against the Bush Administration, or people connected to him, or the military."

"He said ... I vow to stop my anti-nuke activities or something along those lines...." says Robert MacLean.

“He wouldn’t ever, ever say anything against the Bush administration again, you know, that was one of his last statements, that he wasn’t going to do that anymore,” adds Clifton Johnson.

Woodward then tried “to convince people that what he was saying was true and he could verify his own background and his sincerity and all this stuff. And ... he did a second round of these notes and he did hand them out,” Mary Treat explains.

Janis Chaillou recalls, “He kept saying that if we wanted, if we didn’t believe him, if anyone had a cell phone, he would call the person on the cell phone, and he kept asking, and I actually said we don’t have a cell phone.... He pulled out a handful of cards. They seemed like credit cards and papers, “I have this, I have this.” I think there was more information that he was wanting to show us, that he was real, that he was honest and what he was doing. He kept trying to show us that he had proof that everything he was saying was true.”

At that point another congregant approached Woodward and spoke soothingly to him. Donna Payne recalls, “Michael Italia said “Bob will you let me talk to you?” and that’s when he said his nickname, “you can call me by my nickname, Woody.” And he sort of backed off the podium, almost like he had gotten what he needed.”

Michael Italia describes the next several moments:

“He asked for a phone call could be made to someone who could vouch for who he was. His verbalizations remained pressured throughout the whole time but there was a brief quieting of his tone at this point. Someone in the congregation still sitting there, I think her name was Emily, produced a cell phone. I took it and a chair, which I placed to the side of the podium. ... I was shaking like a leaf inside. He handed me a yellow sheet of paper..., which had a number of names and phone numbers, many of which had 413 area codes. He told me a name... to call. At that point... I believe he was sitting in his chair also. He also said to tell them Woody was calling, almost matter of factly. I got an answering machine on that first call, so I hung up. I told him so which may have frustrated him to some degree. I believe he stood up, slightly increased in agitation, then he recited another number to call... I dialed that number on which I again got an answering machine. ... I recall seeing one police car drive by out the window about this time.

“I was thinking of other ways to connect with him in order to redirect him away from his delusions, such as seeing if he would talk about his work with kids, etc. Just as I was into starting that tack, a male congregation member came into the hall and yelled for everyone to get out.”

THE POLICE ENTERED THE SANCTUARY

In the following moment, events unfolded so quickly that the eyewitnesses have varying recollections of what occurred. In this interval of confusion, there are three events that certainly occurred in very close proximity to each other. One was that congregant Tom Baehr, as instructed by Officer Terrance Parker via dispatch, entered the sanctuary and announced in a loud voice that everyone must leave that area. Another was that the police entered the sanctuary seconds after this announcement. It is also clear that at this time Woodward became very frightened and upset, and backed away, once again placing the knife against his eye and threatening suicide. The point

about which the eyewitnesses do not agree is exactly what precipitated Woodward's sudden increase of panic. Some say that it was the announcement, others that it was his awareness of the police.

Michael Italia recalls that after the announcement, "He immediately stood up again and in just a very quick motion he produced the knife again and held it up to his eye."

However, Mary Treat believes that "he got very agitated and pulled the knife again after the police came in," and that Woodward was sitting on a stool when the police entered.

Sheri Manning recalls that "When a person told people to leave the building, Woodward became agitated and loudly told people in a desperate voice not to go." However, she also recalls that she wishes she could have told the police to use a different entrance "because I don't think the knife was out at that point."

Heidi Bredfeldt's recollection is that "when the police came in, he jumped up and he began to just really , and he screamed and he carried on."

Charles Tummino recalls that the knife came out after the announcement, followed by suicide threats, and that "it seems very soon after he's threatening to kill himself that two policemen came in." But he also recalls that "The arrival of the police escalated his threats of killing himself, shouting for us to stay."

Robert Treat's perception of the moment encapsulates the discrepancy that predominates in the testimony. When asked "when the police walked in, did the guy have the knife out?" he replied, "I don't know, I think so, yes. I don't recall. I never saw him pull the knife. I mean, one minute it wasn't there and next minute he pulled it."

Robert MacLean recalled in December that "When the police came, he had it (the knife) right up to his face like this, he was going to puncture his eye." But in March he had come to feel instead that, according the police interviewer, "He thinks the knife came out the second time after the police arrived."

In December, MacLean was nonetheless convinced that "When the police arrived and that just... everything just blew up. A sight of a uniform just totally changed the whole character of the scene."

President Butterfield's prediction regarding the sight of the uniform's impact on Woodward had proved correct. We will never know how the events might have been different if the police had honored the request of the people on the scene for a plain clothes officer.

Some witnesses observed that Woodward became aware of the police's presence prior to their entrance into the sanctuary, and that this was what precipitated his state of increased panic.

Tommy Thomas, from his clear vantage point in the front of the sanctuary recalls, "I saw a policeman come in to the room but he was kind of behind a corner. The entrance isn't readily visible from the front of the room. The policeman kind of peeked out and ducked right back again. ... but Bob Woodward saw him and immediately retreated over towards the opposite corner.... He retreated over that way and became extremely agitated."

Donna Payne recalls that Woodward's awareness of the police first came through his hearing. She says, "And then somebody was mumbling, 'are the police here yet? The police are here.' ... And then he said 'I hear that. Are the police there? If they police are here they are going to torture me, they are going to kill me.'"

Perhaps the strongest indication that Woodward did not become highly agitated until after he became aware of the police is the recollection of Officer Marshall Holbrook, who says, "I looked around a corner into the sanctuary and observed two male subjects at the front of the room. One subject was shorter and the other was taller and had a blue shirt on. The shorter one was on a cell phone, talking. I asked a woman who was leaving which one was the subject, and she told me it was the one with the blue shirt on, and to be careful because he has a knife."

And if Woodward did have the knife out of his pocket at that point, he did not have it up to his eye, because Holbrook recalled that at that moment, "I couldn't see his hands, his hands were down. I couldn't see if he had the knife or anything else in his hand at that time, no."

THE POLICE FAILED TO ASSESS THE SITUATION UPON ARRIVAL

We know that the police arrived at the scene believing that a hostile suspect was threatening a church full of people with a knife. What we don't know is why they did not appear to take stock of the situation at the moment of their arrival, and use their impressions to determine the most appropriate response.

Officer Holbrook, arriving on the scene before Terrence Parker and William Davies, got out of his car and approached the church entryway. He states that he found the atmosphere puzzling. He found "some nervous people" at the entrance.

"There was a bunch of people, probably might have been six or eight people standing in the entrance way. And I kind of thought that was strange, especially if there was a man in there with a knife."

And though he "came in contact with a few people" on his way up to the building, as well as at the entryway, he did not speak to any of them. He says "an unknown man" told him that "the guy had a knife and he was threatening people and that he was in the sanctuary of the church." He never followed up on obtaining this unknown man's name, however. When he was asked if he could describe the man, Holbrook said "I can't tell ya. I don't know."

He also "heard people say things like, you know, like there's only one officer, I hope there's more coming. Things like that." But he says he "didn't see specifically who was making the comments."

When Holbrook peered into the sanctuary, it was not clear which of the people inside was the unwanted subject. He asked someone to point out the man, whose hands, he says, were down, and no knife was visible to him at that time. Certainly, he did not observe a scene of chaos and panic. What his statement indicates that he saw was a man in close proximity to a number of people, none of whom seemed panicked.

He motioned for the seated parishioners in the sanctuary to come out. "Um, and they were just ignoring me which I thought was kind of strange, but they just, they were just sitting in their chairs and I kept motioning and they wouldn't come out."

Holbrook paused at the entrance to the sanctuary, awaiting reinforcements. “ I waited for (the other officers). I wasn’t just going to just go right into a situation, you know, without another officer there...”

But at this juncture, Holbrook does not report engaging any of the witnesses gathered nearby in questions about what had transpired there. While his deciding not to question the people standing outside the church might be justified by his determination to make a speedy intervention, there seems less justification in his failing to query any of the people near the doors while he was waiting for his backup.

Meanwhile, Terrance Parker and William Davies drove up to the church. They approached the building and this is what they saw, according to Parker. “People, apparently from the church were milling around talking, and it looked like, ah, after if you will an afterglow type session where people were congregate (sic) and talk and once we got out of the car we made contact with people and just told them that they need to leave the area and to move out to the parking lot and to move away from the building and such.”

Parker says a “well dressed” woman approached him and said, “please be gentle or please something about that, and you know, he seemed like a sick man, or something, and I said OK, thank you, but you need to leave, please leave.” Davies describes “the woman we talked to” as wearing “ a blue smock or something... something that a priest would wear.” Since another parishioner has stated that the minister, Deborah Mero, attempted to brief the officers on their way into the building, we can conjecture that this woman was Mero.

Neither Parker nor Davies asked any of the people assembled near the church for any information. Davies reports, “A few people asked us what to do and we told them to leave. You know, to get away from the building and stuff but we were actively walking toward the church and we didn’t actually stop. We kept going.”

Davies continues, “We didn’t actually stop, we got out of the car, we told people that were accessible to us to leave, you know, and to stay back away from the building and then, you know, we continued to go on in. And the woman we did talk to we told her to stay back and leave the building.”

They encountered Holbrook at the entrance to the sanctuary and Holbrook told Parker he was frustrated that people were refusing to leave. None of them report that they discussed what they were seeing, which in fact was quite different than what they’d expected to find.

“I didn’t notice any panic,” reports Parker, “I did not notice anyone crying or anything, It was almost like an afterglow. Church was over so how is things going and that type of um, mixture of people talking and talking maybe about what’s on or what, I mean there was no panic. It was no crying, there was no oh my God they’re all in there, he’s got a knife, nothing like that. It was, it was um, extremely serene.”

Davies recalls that he wondered if people were “in shock” because they “appeared in a docile or domestic state.”

But it did not seem to have occurred to the officers to make a renewed assessment of the risk level by discussing the situation with these docile, non-panicked, mingling people. As Parker describes their intention at that moment, there was “ just a room full

of people which I didn't focus much on them, other than focusing on there are a bunch of people in there and what's our focus here, where's our subject?"

Heidi Bredfeldt later reflected, "I just wish someone had briefed them. Maybe someone did, but I doubt it. It was so... I mean from the time I saw them to the time they shot him, if there was two minutes, it was a long time. It was very fast."

WOODWARD PANICKED AS THREE OFFICERS CAME TOWARD HIM

Heidi Bredfeldt recalls that at this point the police "charged forward... they ran right for him." Woodward's reaction was dramatic.

Charles Tummino says, "He yelled, see there they are. You know, here they are. Um, and they're going to kill me, they're going to threaten me, they're going to torture. He yelled out all these things. And he said he would kill himself if they take another step forward and the police yelled 'you all leave.' Like really shouted."

Jane Worley says, "I think he said something like 'Oh, God, It's the fucking police,' or 'it's the police,' which was one of his first nightmares, that he told the congregation before the police had arrived, he didn't want the police to be involved and didn't want the police there."

Polly Wilson states, "I think he said he didn't want to be tortured, and rather than be tortured he would hurt himself."

The minute between when the police entered and when the first shot was fired went by very fast for some witnesses. Recollections of precisely when the guns were drawn vary somewhat.

Recalls Adelbert Ames, "At this point, the uniformed police burst in with pistols drawn. This seemed to me about the worst thing that could have happened from the point of view of the man's mental state. He was suddenly attacked by this. And they shouted at him and that just really upset him. People up until then had been speaking to him in a consoling type way. I thought this was the worst psycho therapy from a psycho therapist point, which was the worst thing that could have happened."

"When I saw the officer point the gun at him, at that point I felt like Woody started getting more escalated," Jane Worley recalls.

"And I was aware of, with the police coming in that his anxiety escalated," says Heidi Bredfeldt, "I mean, he obviously was afraid. And I think also the way they came in, I mean, it's scary."

Polly Wilson remembers with sadness, "I had glanced at the police when they first came in, and I immediately looked back at Mr. Woodward because I felt that he would be traumatized by the police presence. And he was ... And I thought this really is a terrible tragedy because here was a man who was almost under control, he'd been talked into being quiet..."

Mary Treat agrees, "I don't know how much he had calmed down, but he was calmer than when he first came in. But then he became very agitated. ... I think these three men just fulfilled whatever he was thinking of his vision that he had... There were these men, you know, with their outfits, which can be rather threatening if you think you're involved in something like that. So he became, I think, quite agitated then."

Jane Worley, a psychiatric nurse who had hoped to attempt to reach out to Woodward and help him, says that the sudden advance by the police put an end to her hopes. "I felt like by the time the gun got out and Woody was responding the way that he was, I felt that it was not going to be easy for me to begin intervening, because it had escalated."

ONE MINUTE FROM POLICE ENTRANCE TO THE FIRST SHOT

The police advanced toward Woodward. He was desperate, according to several witnesses, crying out 'No police, no police', begging the congregation not to leave him, and pointing the knife at his eye, verbally threatening suicide. Phyllis Woodring states that he was, at that point, "backing into the right corner of the room."

The witnesses disagree somewhat on whether the police were shouting. Most recall that the officer leading the advance, Officer Parker, spoke forcefully, in a loud voice.

Mary Treat says that the officers "were not yelling that I am aware of..."

Tommy Thomas says, "They were trying to be reasonable. They were not shouting or... they were trying to ... all's I can say is that they were trying to calm him down."

But Jane Worley recalls it as a "yelling competition."

"I think they tried to match his volume and you know, that must made him more upset," says Clifton Johnson. "They were very directed in telling him what to do, not very many words. ... you know, they wanted to get control of the situation. He raised his voice. His volume went up and he backed away."

Charles Tummino recalls that the police shouted at the congregation, "He said he would kill himself if they take another step forward and the police yelled you all leave. Leave now really shouted. And he yelled 'no, no, no, don't leave or I'll kill myself right now,' and then it happened very quickly. Where the police moved up quickly."

"I didn't think (the tone of voice) appropriate for speaking to someone who was psychotic and upset," says Adelbert Ames. "I mean it was very loud shouts. And I don't recall more than I think they said drop the knife."

The great majority of the eyewitnesses do not recall hearing the police say anything other than "drop the knife." And all agree that Woodward did not comply. Several remember him saying "I'm not going to" or words to that effect. However, it should be noted that the witnesses are also unanimous in their recollection that at no time during the police officers' advance across the sanctuary, did Woodward turn the knife away from himself, that his gestures with the knife were all suicidal. And some felt that he was not calm enough to actually consider his options.

Sheri Manning felt that Woodward's suicidal ideations prevented him from responding to the order to drop the knife. "It didn't even seem like he really recognized... he seemed to be in an altered state, you know. I was almost like he had the whole thing set in his mind, and he was just setting the whole stage, in a way."

But others felt that Woodward was simply too agitated and upset to cope with the officer's forceful demands.

"There wasn't a lot of dialogue, definitely not," states Heidi Bredfeldt. "There was some interchange because I remember the police officers voice being very, very... you

know, booming... But you know, he didn't respond to anybody there before. If you try to any kind of authority with him before, he'd just say 'get away, get away.' ... You have to make contact with someone before you can control their behavior. You need to establish some eye contact. You've got to get them to focus on you."

"The only real thing I heard was for him to drop the knife. He was not complying with their instructions...He wasn't listening to anything they were saying to him," states Janis Chaillou. "At that time he wasn't acting in a sane manner... I don't think he heard the police. He may have heard them with his ears, but mentally, no."

Clifton Johnson expresses incredulity at the tactics of the police. "Why were they moving forward like that, you know... it was like all three of them were moving forward and they weren't trying to, you know, to engage him in any way."

Jane Worley, the psychiatric nurse, shares Johnson's concern. "But I don't remember the police officer saying anything more other than 'drop the knife'. And that's probably what concerns me. I felt like there could have been more potential for verbal de-escalation."

When asked how Woodward responded to the officer's demands, Worley replies, "Best I can recall was, he said 'No, I'm not going to.' He just insisted he was going to hurt himself. I don't remember him saying anything else. He made no threats to the officers. He made no threats to anyone else."

Interestingly, the recollections of Officer Parker do not include the one phrase all the eyewitnesses heard him say. He recalls, "I quietly and slowly walked forward and that that point I was able to say to the people, folks I need you to leave, would you all come this way and then we're going to leave, and the suspect was very upset with that."

Parker continues to describe himself as walking calmly, and saying many things to Woodward, such as "nobody needs to get killed, we don't do that," and "just come on, calm down" and "no let's sort this out, everything's going to be OK." In fact, Officer Parker describes himself effecting so many points of consoling speech, such a slow procession through the pews, and so many interactions with the parishioners, it is difficult to imagine him achieving it all, along with the drawing and aiming of his gun, in the scant one minute in which the entire encounter actually took place.

His account of himself as "slowly (kept) going forward" is also contradicted in a subsequent reply. When asked where he positioned the gun after he pulled it from his holster, he recalls, "I believe I kept it down by my left side. I'm a lefty, so I, I was running and, and I just pulled it out and kept it by my left side."

By contrast, Robert Treat recalls "I didn't expect to see guns come out, quite frankly, and the next thing I knew, one of the officers had taken a gun and put it behind his back and kept talking to him."

Officer Parker, during his description of his many helpful remarks to Woodward, was asked "Did you give him any orders on what to do?" His reply was "I did not at that point." However, his account of the event moves directly to the moment where he says that Woodward charged at him, without ever admitting that he instructed Woodward to drop the knife.

Both of the other officers state that they did not address Woodward, but simply moved into position in the room on either side of Officer Parker, who positioned himself in the center aisle.

Officer Holbrook recalls, "I didn't engage the suspect. When we get up there, Officer Parker basically immediately engaged him and telling him to put the knife down and so I let him take over as a primary contact. ... He was the one telling, directing the suspect to put the knife down."

One witness, Donna Payne, has a surprisingly different recollection of this crucial one minute period from either that of the police or the other witnesses. She recalls Officer Holbrook ("one policeman there before the others") entering the sanctuary alone and "having a conversation" with Woodward for approximately two minutes before the other officers entered. Holbrook has stated that he did not enter the room alone or engage Woodward in any dialogue at all. Payne also recalls "the officers" saying a variety of things to Woodward, with their guns still holstered, which none of the other witnesses seem to have observed.

These are the statements attributed to the officers by Payne: "You've really got to put the knife down. What's your name... you got to give it up, you got to stop this... Just give us the knife, give us the knife... We're here to help you and this situation... we were called in when this situation, we were called here, we were asked to come here... these people don't want you here. You know, you're causing a scene. You're causing a problem. Just come with me, let me help you, let me help you. ... I want to know what it is that I can do to get you just to come with me."

Jane Worley partially corroborates Payne's statement with her recollection, "I think someone said something like 'we're here to help you.' But right after that the gun was out and then came forth the other order, 'drop the knife' and then the shooting ensued."

After the lapse of one minute, the officers, with guns drawn and trained on the hysterical Woodward, fired.

Robert Treat observed that the officer "Moved forward, there was minimal conversation and the next thing I knew, they were shooting. It moved very quickly from when the gun was pulled and they started walking... the next thing I knew they were shooting the guy. It was very one, two, three."

"The three officers approached him and were about seven feet away from him when one pulled his gun then followed by another," recalls Michael Italia. "They shouted for him to put the knife down, which he did not do. The next thing I knew, 3-5 shots rang out and down Bob went, where he was subdued by the officers. This all happened very quickly, and took me by surprise."

In fact, several congregants described the drawing of guns and the firing of ammunition as a turn of events they could scarcely believe.

"The police shouted at him to drop the knife, when he apparently didn't respond, but became more agitated, there were two or three shots. I assumed this was not ammunition and was surprised to see him fall," says Adelbert Ames.

"I was totally shocked," says Phyllis Woodring. "I did not expect guns. I thought, just talk him out."

"I just couldn't believe it was actually happening," remembers Sheri Manning.

"I wish they had spent some more time talking to him," says Heidi Bredfeldt. "I mean there's not anybody spent any time with this guy who was so desperate. I mean this man was hurting. But he was more than that. He was crazy. He was obviously crazy."

Tommy Thomas recalled, "The one who was nearest to me pulled out a gun, and I said, My God, what is he going to do? And I can't quite remember what it was that made him think it was necessary to shoot.". Thomas added "I have a lot of editorial thoughts..."

"I don't see in any shape or form that this man was a threat to the police..." states Robert Treat.

WOODWARD'S KNIFE WAS POINTED AT HIMSELF IN THE MOMENT BEFORE THE SHOOTING

The moment when the officers fired first one, then in rapid succession six more, bullets at Woodward, was a moment of chaos and confusion. The parishioners were alarmed by the threats of suicide and the loud orders that were being shouted by Woodward and the officers. The officers had entered the church, moved up to the front and aimed their weapons all in less than a minute. Woodward was "backing into the right corner of the room" and hopping from one foot to another in panic, and some people were still making their way to the exit. In the midst of this pandemonium, the shots were fired. The events that immediately preceded the firing of the first shot are the most controversial of the entire event. However, the disparity of recollection is found primarily between the police and the witnesses rather than between the witnesses themselves.

The police maintain that Woodward abruptly altered from his course of pleading for sanctuary and threatening suicide, during which time he had, by all accounts, made no threatening gestures or statements towards another person, to a dramatic charge with deadly intent, his knife aimed directly at Officer Parker. Parker says that Woodward ran approximately twenty feet towards him before he fired the first shot.

Here are Parker's words: "Without warning and without provocation he ran at me with the knife. He took the knife from where he had it, from his face he had set it, let it go down a little bit and then he just came running at me... He had posed the knife directly at me...He had sort of dropped his hand and all of a sudden he started to run and that he had the knife off to his side running toward me."

When asked if he said anything to Woodward at that point, Parker says "I just shot."

"So," the interrogator went on, "he's about twenty to twenty-five feet away, he takes a run at you and when he gets to be within six to eight feet that's when you start firing your weapon?"

Parker replied, "For the time it took me to bring my weapon up to aim and in that distance had closed extremely quickly. I was just giving an estimate of what I think is the distance."

Officer Holbrook's recollection is somewhat different. He says, that prior to the alleged charge, Woodward was approximately 12 feet from Officer Parker.

“Officer Parker told him probably twice, maybe even more times to put the knife down, um, and from there it all happened real, very fast. He didn’t bring the knife down from his eye, but he was holding it in his right hand with the blade pointed out. And just that was in the middle of this, that was just for a split second, there was no warning, and he just charged at Officer Parker. Officer Parker barely had time, but I did hear him yell stop, and an, he obviously didn’t stop, and ah, Officer Parker, ah, shot him.”

Holbrook says that his own shots volleyed extremely rapidly after Parker’s. “He had the knife up at that point... probably by his elbow at like 90 degrees and kinda then went back like that and started again. Um, that’s when I fired at him also... I mean the delay (between first and subsequent shots) was like a millionth of a second. When I shot I mean it was like a second if that. I mean, it was all very fast.”

It is interesting to note the discrepancies between Parker and Holbrook’s descriptions of that moment. Holbrook maintains that Woodward had already moved toward Parker and stood only 12 feet from him prior to the “charge”, which would have made the charge very short, covering only six feet, whereas Parker claims that Woodward “ran” at him for approximately twenty feet.

Holbrook states that he recalls Parker yelling “stop,” but Parker says he did not say anything, but “just shot.” There is not a single eyewitness who recalls hearing the word “stop” uttered before the shots.

Officer Davies, who did not fire his weapon, made this statement: “Subject came after people. Subject went from holding the knife to his eye and turned towards Officer Parker and the people many of who still had not moved and were in imminent danger of serious injury or death. Subject became more and more agitated, lunging at Officer Parker who had to fire along with Officer Holbrook to prevent Officer Parker from being stabbed, or any of people sitting in front of Sanctuary.”

When asked why he did not shoot, Davies replied, “The only reason I didn’t fire my weapon was Officer Parker was in front of me and there were other people that were in front of me... I didn’t have a safe shot. There was not a direct line of fire.”

Although the State’s investigative process dismisses the accounts of eyewitnesses who did not have an unobstructed view of Woodward at the moment of the shooting, Officer Davies’ account is accepted without question.

So the officers, while they do not agree as to whether the alleged charge was a “run” or a “lunge”, all state that Woodward rushed at Officer Parker with intent to kill him. What is most striking about this claim is that there is not one eyewitness who corroborates it. Not one person saw Woodward do anything that could be described as charging at the officers with deadly intent, nor heard anyone shout “Stop”.

What the body of evidence does indicate is that Woodward did move from the right rear corner of the room to the left front side of the podium where he collapsed and fell, but only after the shooting began.

Attorney General Sorrell, in his report delivered on April 2, 2001, describes that Woodward “traveled a distance of approximately 15 feet in the direction of and across the front of Officer Parker.”

Sorrell’s account does not claim that Woodward entered the aisle where Parker was standing. Rather, it describes that he traveled past the entrance to the aisle and “across

the front” of Parker. Therefore it is plausible to suppose that Woodward was not lunging at the officer’s person, since he passed up his chance to make contact with Parker as he traveled in front of him. Instead it appears that he was rushing across the room, perhaps in self-defense, or perhaps in panic.

Tommy Thomas, who had a particularly clear view while standing on a raised ramp at the back of the room, speculates that Woodward may have crossed the room in an attempt to flee upon realizing that the officers were firing at him. The police say that this is implausible because, as Parker explains, “There was a door directly behind him that he was able to take if he wanted to flee.” However, since Woodward had never been in the building before, he may not have been aware of that exit. He may have been attempting to leave the way he’d come in. He may simply have been reacting without any particular intent, as it is difficult to imagine a person standing stock still while being shot multiple times.

Moreover the assertion that Woodward received all the shots before he fell is not borne out by the evidence. There is eyewitness and forensic evidence that strongly implies he was shot after he fell to the floor.

Witness Tommy Thomas stated explicitly to reporters from the Hartford Courant in January 3, 2001 that he did observe this to be the case. He also reiterated this observation publicly at a community meeting at the Quality Inn in Brattleboro in January of 2002.

Many eyewitnesses express marked confusion as to the sequence of events between the first and last shots. Several recall that they were perplexed at the way Woodward started out in the corner of the room and yet fell in front of the podium. While the witnesses agree he was standing near the corner when the first shot was fired, the rapidity of the shooting seems to have blurred their perception of the relationship between the discharge of the weapons, and Woodward’s movement. It is likely that the ballistics report would shed considerable light on this question, but that information has not been made public.

Janis Chaillou, in her written chronology of the events, stated: “Police moved in. 1-2 shots. Fell to floor near podium, blood. Several shots. Police surrounded him.” She also wrote, “Popping sound. Several more times. Total of 4-6 shots. He fell in front of podium. I saw blood on his elbow, floor. Still yelling. 3-6 shots. I do not know who fired.” These statements would be consistent with the actual total of seven shots. Yet they strongly indicate that some of those shots were fired after Woodward fell.

Nurse Jane Worley, who dove to the floor after witnessing the first shot, did closely observe the locations of the wounds. She speculated, “I have to question the traumatic state the police officer was in then he delivered those shots. Because I didn’t see how the other shots were inflicted, if the gentleman was turning over, if he started taking the knife to himself, I don’t know. I don’t know if that would explain the reasons why he received the other gunshot wounds where he did.” This statement, with its use of the words “turning over,” would strongly imply that Worley estimated Woodward to have been shot while down.

There are other evidentiary indications that Woodward may have been shot while lying on the floor, and these can be found in the analysis section of Justice For Woody’s September 24, 2002 Report.

Examination of the eyewitness testimony reveals that the witness accounts do not support the officer's claim that Woodward charged at Officer Parker before the first shot.

What follows is an attempt to make sense of the chaotic moment of the first shot from the eyewitness point of view.

Each of the eighteen eyewitnesses agree that as the officers advanced upon Woodward, he was backing into the corner of the room, near a Christmas tree that stood there, and was pointing the knife at himself while threatening suicide. There is no disagreement on this point.

During the seconds in which the police drew their weapons and ordered Woodward to put the knife down, the eighteen witnesses directed their attention variously. It should be kept in mind, however, that it is a matter of only a few seconds from the time when all agree Woodward was threatening no one but himself to the moment of the alleged charge.

Scrutinizing the eighteen witness statements, one can discern that several of them cannot make an account of what Woodward did during those few seconds. Four of the witnesses relate that they were not looking at the proceedings at all, but were focused on leaving the room themselves, on assisting other parishioners, or on diving down to the floor at the sight of drawn guns. Two say that their view of Woodward was blocked by the police officers themselves. One recalls clearly that he was looking at the police, not at Woodward, and another admits that she cannot recall where she was looking.

Charles Tummino, who decided to exit when he saw the guns, said that he had turned away from his view of Woodward for three seconds when he heard the first shot. Prior to that three seconds, Tummino maintains that he never saw Woodward lower the knife at all, nor did he hear him threaten any of the officers. All of those who cannot claim a partial or direct view of Woodward at the moment of the shooting agree that they never saw Woodward lower the knife or point it at another person prior to his being shot.

Of those who had a partial view, there is no recollection of seeing Woodward come forward, certainly not at a run. Donna Payne, who says she could see Woodward the whole time "except the part of his body that was blocked," feels there may have been "some provocation on his part", although the last thing that she remembers Woodward doing before the first shot was that he "had the knife up to his head most of the time, but right afterward I thought I saw him switch the knife from one hand to the other." She makes no mention of a charge or even a forward movement.

The detective asked her again, "just before he was shot he had the knife..." and her reply was "Up, definitely." "Towards his head?" She was asked. "Yup, yup" Payne answered.

Iain Worth could see Woodward, and was looking back and forth between him and the officers, but admits that the angle from which he was looking at Woodward made his perception, to quote the interviewer, "more of an assumption that he was holding the knife to his temple because he couldn't really see exactly."

Worth, however, does not corroborate the "charge" story, recalling that prior to the first shot, Woodward was "standing". Here is Worth's recollection, in the words of his interviewer: "He said the man was backing away from the police towards the right

corner... He said he thinks they (the police) took one or two steps forward before stopping, then shouting for the man to drop the knife. He said the next thing that happened was the shot."

Asked if Woodward may have pointed the knife toward the officers, Worth said "Yes, he may have stretched it out but it was in a defensive posture, like stay away.

He was backing away."

Mary Treat said the officers were blocking her view, but that she "saw the top half" of Woodward. She did not observe a charge. "Did you see him make any motion...with the knife or himself, toward either the officers or anybody else in the congregation?" asked the interviewer. Treat replied, "Only to himself. He had it up to his eye."

"But did he physically move his body anywhere?" persisted the interviewer. "Did he make a motion like he was walking toward them or he was walking toward a member of the congregation?"

"No, to me he didn't..." Mary Treat replied. "I didn't think he moved toward them or away...he certainly didn't move toward the congregation. I thought he was just there threatening to kill himself if they came any closer."

Janis Chaillou explained to the interviewer : "I can't tell you the back and forth movement, if he moved forward or if the police moved forward. I could not tell you that. I don't have a clear recollection of that. I can't tell you their movements. I was more focused on what he was doing and I was also focused on getting the people out. It would only be a peripheral view."

Chaillou was questioned at length, but stated many times she "wasn't really looking at him", and that she "wasn't sure, because she turned.". She made a number of statements indicating her uncertainty of the exact sequence of events.

However, the interest of the police interviewer was drawn to Chaillou's recollection that Woodward "did have the knife, it was not in his eye, he had the knife forward," which is what she says she saw after the first shot. The detective questioned her closely about the position of the knife, but her reply remained consistent with that of the other witnesses. When asked: "Just prior to the initial gunshot, you said that... he took the blade and... made a gesture towards the officers? So that the blade was pointed to them, or walked toward them or moved toward them?" she replied "...I'll be honest with you, I believe it was after the first gunshot."

"He moved forward," the interviewer asked again, "was this after they told him to drop the knife?"

"He had the knife in front of his eye, over by the Christmas tree." Chaillou replied, "And he was...kind of...just...when people are scared they're kind of hopping back and forth...When he took his steps forward, I can not tell you. I do know he moved from where he was in the corner to coming over by the podium. I saw him moving. Now whether as he was moving, they were moving, I cannot tell you that...That...those last few things happened extremely quickly, obviously. The gunshots were very, very quick."

Norman Hunt was not asked directly where he was looking at the moment of the first shot, and at no time does he mention any impediment to having seen what happened at that time. His comments: "I want to stress one thing, you've probably heard

this from others, too. There was no threatening done. I mean, he did not threaten anybody except himself... I didn't see him point it at any time except to his own eye."

Jane Worley "watched the first gun shot" at which time she and another parishioner "went down to the floor and covered our heads for safety."

When the interviewer asked Worley "Was there anything that...at the point that the officer shot -that Woodward had done, made a movement that you could see, started toward anybody, anything?" she replied, "I didn't see him move toward anybody else. Like I said, the knife got closer to his right eye... He made no threats to the officers. He made no threats to anyone else."

Adelbert Ames was looking rapidly back and forth from the officers to Woodward. When asked at which he was looking when the first shot was fired, he replied, "I don't know if I was actually looking at him or the policemen. I think I was watching the police."

When Ames was asked if he saw any movement forward on Woodward's part, he replied, "Not that I saw. I think that I would have remembered I think if he had turned in any aggressive way and threatened them... I think he was threatening himself with his knife...I didn't see him threaten anyone else...he never pointed his knife that I saw...at any other person...I could see no one near to him that might have been hurt by his knife and I didn't see him point it at anyone but himself. Having worked in a psychiatric hospital I didn't think his actions were particularly remarkable for a psychotic, and I didn't think his paranoid reactions were a threat to others."

When the interviewer continued, "Did he take a step forward toward the police at all?" Ames replied again, "Not that I saw... I would have remembered, I think, if he had turned in any aggressive way and threatened them. But I think he was very threatened."

When interviewed a second time three months later, Ames remained certain. "I would have remembered if he did something that appeared to use the knife on someone else."

Tommy Thomas reported that he had a clear view of the entire event, standing on a raised ramp at the back of the sanctuary. Heidi Bredfeldt verifies this: "A person that stays there the whole time, is way up in the corner, was Tommy Thompson. I feel for him. He stayed there the whole time, never moving."

"One pulled a gun," wrote Thomas, "And when Woodward pointed the knife at his own eyes, shot... He certainly wasn't threatening the policemen in any way and then the policeman shot."

"Did he approach the officers when he first encountered them?" The police interviewer queried Thomas, who replied, "No, I would not say that he threatened them. He was always threatening himself, threatening to harm himself."

"When he fell forward did you see Mr. Woodward make any kind of gesture or threatening motion?" Thomas was asked. "He wasn't coming at them with the knife like this," he replied. "The knife was always pointed toward himself."

Polly Wilson did see Woodward in the moment before the shooting. "I was watching him much more closely than I was watching them because I felt that he was psychotic," she reports. "When the shots were fired I was looking at him. I wasn't looking at them." "At the time of the first shot, he was standing to the left hand side of

the lectern," Wilson states. "At the time of the first shot he had a knife towards his own eye. He looked defensive, not offensive, if you know what I mean by that difference."

Three months later, Wilson's recollection was still certain, as the interviewer's notes attest: "If anything he was shuffling backwards at the time he was shot. Not moving forward at all. She did not see Mr. W. bring knife down from his head prior to first shot."

Sheri Manning says that she saw Woodward at the moment of the first shot. "I saw him in front of the tree, right there with the knife in front of his eye... and I heard the gun and I saw the gun and him."

"From what you could see, what caused the officers to shoot?" asked the Detective.

After a long pause, which is noted in the transcript, Manning replied, "You got me. I think it was the fear factor. I don't know how they were trained. I don't know..."

"From what you saw, was there something that Bob did that caused them to react by shooting?" the interviewer asked.

"I didn't see him pull anything out, you know, to shoot at him, you know? I don't know. To tell you the truth, what I did in my mind, I actually told myself I thought it was a stun gun. I thought it was something like a tranquilizer, something to calm him... I mean I couldn't believe that that's the way you would...react. I mean, is that the way you deal with them? I mean, I don't know, I don't know. Was there anything else going on?"

"Bob had the knife at his eye, you said?" the interviewer went on.

"He was definitely threatening to kill himself," Manning replied, "definitely threatening to kill himself... He was not attacking. He was not attacking."

WOODWARD WAS HANDCUFFED WHILE HE BLED

After the shots ceased, Marshall Holbrook radioed the dispatch center with this report, "Dispatch, 76, We have shots fired. We need Rescue up here now! We need Rescue!" Officer John Freschette responded, and Holbrook told him, "Please head this way. We have him in custody, shots have been fired. He has been struck."

Terrence Parker got on the radio as well and reported, "Dispatch we've had shots fired. Rescue right in as soon as you can... Notify detectives and states attorney."

Police Chief John Martin, and Officer Steve Rowell both declared that they were on the way to the scene. Holbrook instructed the dispatcher to notify Brattleboro Memorial Hospital of the shooting as well. John Martin, per the dispatcher, ordered all detectives to report to the scene, instructing one to bring a camera. Officers Mike Gorman, David Gerard and Gene Wrin reported that they were en route to the scene.

The dispatcher contacted the Brattleboro Fire Department and the medics of Rescue Inc. who were staged at a nearby school. Earlier, the medics had been told by the dispatcher that they were awaiting the outcome of an incident involving "a man with a knife threatening himself and others."

The Rescue personnel who responded reported that the "Medic 1" unit would be responding, and that "Medic 2" would be delayed. Rescue instructed the dispatcher to notify the hospital that shots had been fired and they had a patient.

Dispatcher Barbara Wheelock announced to all units responding, "Scene is secure, we just, they do have one, uh, person in custody, you're all set."

While the other policemen and the medics were en route, Woodward lay on the floor in a widening pool of blood.

Michael Italia says that Woodward was, at that point, "still yelling out" and that he seemed "combative" and that "after he was shot he still had a bit of energy going."

Marshall Holbrook reports that he "took the knife and pried it out of his hand and tossed it away."

Officer William Davies adds a puzzling comment, "He wouldn't relinquish the knife even with wounds to his arm, he would not relinquish the knife that was taken away from him."

Terrence Parker describes, "Once the knife was recovered by Officer Holbrook, I asked Officer Davies to handcuff him. I was going to hold both hands and we got the handcuffs on him and I was not able to cuff him myself. ... His right arm had been shot and it was bleeding and appeared a number of wounds, so it was very, it was a little bit slippery and stuff, but we were able to get both arms into submission for the handcuffing."

One issue of serious concern is that nowhere in the official record or in the Attorney General's report is there any indication that Woodward was read his Miranda rights. The two minute answering machine recording begins with shouts of "handcuffs," so presumably it covers the period of time when Woodward was officially taken into custody, but the Miranda rights are not read during that space of time. By the end of the two minutes, the shouts of the officers have died down, and towels are being discussed over the sound of Woodward's moans and shouts.

Donna Payne says "Polly was there with me ... and she said 'I don't know what they're doing, I don't know what they're doing.' And I said, 'Well, they're trying to restrain him right now. He's still fighting them.' I saw, you know, they had his left wrist and I did see some blood and on the elbow... And he said, 'This is it, I knew it. I knew it. I told you they're going, they're going to torture me now, they're going to torture me.' And he's still screaming the same thing for two to three minutes, and I saw that they finally did get the handcuffs on that one arm, and they're trying to lift him up a little bit to see what's happening or where the blood is or whatever, how he was...And he's saying 'Oh you know, it hurts, it hurts.' He was just moaning a lot, but he's still fighting them, basically."

"They obviously got his stomach," recalls Heidi Bredfeldt, "They got something, I don't even want to know what they got. And I saw his arm hurting. And he was so totally... I could hear him still saying "Don't hurt me. Don't hurt me. I don't want to be hurt. I don't want to be hurt." Bredfeldt told the police in March that she was upset that Woodward was handcuffed after he was shot.

Parishioner Phyllis Woodring, an M.D., approached the officers. Recalls Clifton Johnson, "A doctor went over to... they were going to handcuff him, and she suggested they didn't do that."

Parker says that he allowed Woodring to assist, "A woman approached and said she was a doctor, could I help? I said yes, please do whatever you can."

Woodring recalls, "They were saying everybody get out... but I wasn't about to get out... So I looked and I saw Mr. Woodward was bleeding. I saw that his arm had been... I saw open wounds in his arm... I could see (an entry wound) in his flank ... so I was concerned about what was in the front, but I couldn't get him turned over bcs his hands were handcuffed and I kept asking the policemen, "Please take the handcuffs off so I can turn him over" and they would not take the handcuffs off so I could see that both arms had been shot. I was trying to get the bleeding stopped." Woodring directed a search of the church kitchens for towels.

Michael Italia and Officer Terrence Parker both recall that there was an interval of less than five minutes before the Rescue medics entered. Phyllis Woodring, trying to examine the wounds, says it seemed to her more like ten to twenty minutes. Jane Worley, a nurse, explains that she had time to go out to her car and get her first aid kit and "proceeded to dress some of his wounds" before the medics entered.

Other parishioners perceived that interval as brief. Robert Treat remembers, " I mean the police kept multiplying, like they were reproducing themselves. The ambulance appeared very quickly, it was amazing."

"The ambulance was there almost immediately..." recalls Adelbert Ames, " it was surprising how quickly people arrived including the police."

The first team of medics to arrive consisted of Todd Faulkner and Elena Mayo. Mayo reports that upon entering the church she saw, "A man down, near the podium, with officers and civilians tending to him with towels. His right arm badly and obviously fractured, bleeding on abdomen, hands restrained with handcuffs. When I cut his shirt I saw two holes in his right flank. Officer Davies stated he could not remove the handcuffs because patient had not been searched. But when I said I needed them off, he took them off and did a cursory body search. Patient was conscious and alert to circumstances..."

However, when the second team of medics, which had reported they would be delayed, arrived some minutes later, Brian Patno reports that Woodward was still in handcuffs, and Mayo was "working on getting some ID's."

"I came up and asked what I could do," Patno recalls, "This subject was handcuffed. I asked the officers if they could remove the handcuffs because we had to roll him onto his back and work on him. I told them I didn't feel he was any danger because of his wounds, and which they did, they took the cuffs off and we rolled him and started to work on him."

It is apparent from the combined testimonies that Woodward had bled profusely from the wound in the front of his body, which had been impossible to stanch, during the minutes that elapsed between the shooting and the removal of the handcuffs.

Firefighter Shawn Hammond reports, "The patient was lying on his side, almost face down, with handcuffs on. I noticed a large amount of blood underneath him."

Hammond's statement provides a clue as to the length of time that lapsed between the shooting and the removal of the handcuffs. He states that he was driving the fire engine toward the church when he and firefighter Olney heard the transmission stating that shots had been fired. Here is his account, omitting descriptions of details which would not indicate time lapsed: "We preceded (sic) up to the church ... I positioned the engine in the parking lot facing away from the church to leave room for the ambulance

which I noticed to be right behind us. As I exited the engine I went to the ambulance with FF Onley and grabbed the medical equipment for rescue. I followed them toward the building where we were met by a police officer at the bottom of the exterior stairs... He led us into the building through the rear entrance ... As we approached the patient I could hear him talking to a woman that identified herself as a doctor. The patient was lying on his side almost face down with handcuffs on. I noticed a large amount of blood underneath him. Rescue Inc. initiated care... I was asked to go back to the ambulance to get a new oxygen cylinder and a back board. I then returned inside and set up the oxygen at 15 lpm by non re-breather. At that time Brian Patno requested the handcuffs removed to better treat and assess patient."

Phyllis Woodring describes the wounds she observed: "When the EMTs got there they finally convinced them that they had to get the handcuffs off, so they took the handcuffs off. When they got the handcuffs off, I saw another entry wound in his front, in his upper right quadrant. I never saw any exit wounds but there was a bullet over on his left side. It was just under the skin... This arm had two or three, I think, bullet holes that looked like maybe one was an entry wound with an exit... his right arm. His elbow was shattered...he was bleeding profusely from that right elbow. The left arm was also shot... By the time (the EMTs) got there the elbow was really edematous, it was really swelling. He had a surface wound along his right temple and his eyelid started swelling. The surface wound on his right temple was self-inflicted. He told me later at the hospital. He never lost consciousness. He was totally lucid throughout but he obviously had terrible entries because he had two abdominal bullets and the bullets were still in there and so he was stable."

Even at the hospital, prior to his airlift, Woodring observed Woodward to remain stable. "He never quit breathing. At one point he was having trouble breathing and we made a chest X-ray and it showed his chest was OK. We did not get an abdominal X-ray. I think we probably should have."

Jane Worley says the sight of the bullet wounds troubled her. "I was actively there through the whole time to the time he was carried off on the stretcher. So I saw the gun wounds. I was concerned about the gun wounds, actually. There were three that were on the right arm. Those I understood. Those would make sense, if you were not willing to give up the knife. It was concerning to me is that I distinctly remember seeing two gun shots in the abdomen which looked like it was around the liver. And ...there was no indication to think that there were gun shots on the lower extremities and the concern that I had here was if they're really concerned about getting this guy to give up his weapon or get him immobile or whatever, seems like they would have shot him in the leg. To shoot him in the stomach, I'm not sure what purpose that served."

WOODWARD'S FINAL STATEMENTS

One of the cell phone calls made by Michael Italia reached the answering machine of Keith Carlson and Mary Rives of Amherst, Mass. While it's unclear exactly when the message began recording, it is almost certain that the message options were playing during the firing of the shots, and that the recording began immediately after the shooting ceased.

The first sounds that can be heard on the message are loud shouts of "get out" and "handcuffs," amidst a commotion of several voices, including the shouts and moans of

the fallen Woodward. Howls of pain and cries of “help, help me” can be heard above the echoing din. Several times, Woodward cries, “I love you.”

“Political Assassination! Political Assassination!” the tormented voice exclaims repeatedly. “It’s about Global Warming!” Thus the recording also preserves Woodward’s final effort to relay the urgent message which drove him to enter the church in the first place.

After he fell, Woodward continued to vocalize despite his injuries, throughout the course of his subsequent handling. Michael Italia recalls that he was “yelling and moaning.” Janis Chaillou recalls “bellowing.”

“He ended up on the floor,” Chaillou states, “curled in a fetal position, clutching his stomach. I could see blood on his right arm/elbow area. He was moaning but still ranting, but could not make out the words.”

“He was sort of whining,” says Clifton Johnson, “There was very little movement.... People got around him and I couldn’t see him at all but I heard him saying his arm hurt.”

“He seemed like he was in a state of shock,” Jane Worley remembers, “He said things like, he would ask things like when the paramedic or even the officer was in front of him or above him, people who were actively trying to give him help, you know, he asked who they were, and at one point one of the officers said, well, we’re here to help you. And he kind of laughed at that, thought it was ‘well, isn’t that strange,’ or ‘isn’t that peculiar?’”

Many witnesses recall that Woodward continued to denounce the CIA as his strength failed. “He continued to have a lot of pressured speech. He just continued to say things about plots and CIA and so on and so forth,” says Jane Worley.

The EMTs, and fire personnel also heard Woodward speaking about the CIA.

Elena Mayo: “Patient was speaking in a ranting manner, over and over again about ‘The CIA kills with cancer, The CIA kills with cancer. George Harrison, Tip O’Neil, Bob Marley, Paul Tsongas, Nelson Mandela. This is a conspiracy, the CIA kills with cancer.’ While we were treating him with oxygen IV’s and hemorrhage control, patient continued to rant continuously... stated this was a political assassination because he was an environmentalist and the CIA wanted to keep him quiet. He never said about what. Patient was interactive with ambulance crew and responded appropriately to questions posed to him about his condition, pain levels, breathing difficulty, etc. Patient continued to rant about the CIA and to repeat his litany of names continuously.”

“He was also saying that cancer is the non-political killer and that he wanted to report the murders of George Harrison and Bob Marley and other,” recalls firefighter Shawn Hammond.

EMT Sally Brunson says, “He talked about the CIA trying to get him. He mentioned names, like George Harrison, Jeb Bush and others. Sometimes he would be hollering.”

Brian Patno, a Captain with the responding EMT firm, Rescue Inc. and the senior EMT present on Dec. 2 reports, “Patient rambling about how the CIA was killing him, along with Jeb Bush, Tip O’Neil, and George Harrison... (said he) didn’t care that he was going to die because the CIA was going to get him anyway.”

"It got so bad," recalls Patno, "we just had to tell him to shut up because we weren't able to do our job. And he'd be quiet for a while, okay, I'm sorry. I'm sorry. He'd be quiet for five or ten minutes then all of a sudden he'd go off again talking about the CIA."

Many people present heard Woodward utter statements of apology. There is significant disparity between what the Officers and the EMTs heard and what the parishioners heard, with regard to the apologies.

The officials report hearing Woodward make apologies directly to the officers and state that he had wanted to be killed.

Sally Brunson recalls, "He said he wanted us to tell the officers he apologized for trying to assault them."

"I heard the patient tell everyone to tell the officer he assaulted he was sorry," says firefighter Shawn Hammond.

Officer John Freschette reports that Woodward said, "I apologize for making the officers shoot me, I wanted to die." And "I want to apologize to the officers. I wanted them to shoot me."

EMT Todd Faulkner says Woodward declared, "Please tell the officer I assaulted that I did not want to hurt him. I would not have harmed him. I just wanted him to shoot me." And Faulkner goes on to editorialize that while he believed the majority of Woodward's statements were "rambling" and "irrational," he "observed this patient to be rational at times and trying to apologize for his actions."

Elena Mayo states, "Patient also stated multiple times he wanted 'to apologize to the officer I assaulted.'"

However, the eyewitnesses do not recall any such admission of culpability in Woodward's apologies, remembering instead that Woodward expressed contrition for being at the center of a crisis. Mary Treat simply says that she heard Woodward "apologize for what happened."

Heidi Bredfeldt recalls Woodward saying "I'm really sorry, I'm really sorry."

"He was saying things," Jane Worley remembers, "He apologized for scaring people, and that he loved us all. He thought he was dying."

Phyllis Woodring, who was closer to Woodward than any of the other eyewitnesses at that point, as she continued to attempt to help the EMTs, told an Attorney General's interviewer in March that she "did not remember Woodward saying anything after the shooting about police conduct."

As in other areas of this body of evidence, the disparity between the individual accounts here is found primarily between parishioners and official personnel, but not among the parishioners. However, since most of the eyewitnesses had been ordered to leave the room after the shooting, there were only a few remaining to hear what Woodward said.

None of the three police officers involved in the shooting reported that they heard Woodward say the words "assault" or "apologize." The only similar statement reported by an officer is that Marshall Holbrook says he heard Woodward say he "'didn't intend to hurt the officer' but 'wanted us to kill him.'"

Parker, Davies and Holbrook all wrote statements on the day of the shooting, December 2 and were interviewed the following day, December 3. The word “assault” does not appear in any of their accounts of Woodward’s verbalizations.

It is concerning that the longer after December 2 an official’s statement was taken, the more likely the word “assault” is to appear in their recollection of Woodward’s last words. Considering how unlikely it seems that a civilian in Woodward’s medical condition would use such a word, considering that none of the civilian witnesses heard the word, considering how helpful it would be to the shooters if a confession of “assault” could be attributed to Woodward, this would seem to merit particular scrutiny.

In a study of the EMT and other officials’ reports, the congruity with which all the attending personnel recall Woodward’s apologies is quite striking, as is how prominently these alleged utterances figure in their recollection of the events. In fact, the Brattleboro officials’ reports are so emphatic in their repetition of Woodward’s apologies that their descriptions of the care they administered seem to get lost in the retelling. The accounts seem to contain very little detail about the measures taken to preserve Woodward’s life, with much greater attention given to repeating these alleged apologies.

How much weight can be given to these apologies in seeking to evaluate the conduct of the officers? While Attorney General William Sorrell featured the apologies front and center in his exoneration of the police, there is serious doubt as to whether Woodward was in his right mind when he allegedly uttered these admissions of guilt.

Nurse Jane Worley states that she estimated that Woodward was “in shock.”

EMT Brian Patno recalls, “... there was quite a bit of blood right there...” referring to the floor where Woodward had lain while handcuffed.

Although witnesses report that Woodward was “interactive,” and was able to make “appropriate responses” to questions about his pain levels, his name and date of birth, they also recall that his speech seemed “irrational” and that he was “rambling and rambling.”

He began to repeat that not only had the CIA killed many famous people with cancer, that he himself had been given cancer by the CIA- the first mention of this in the course of the incident. No one who knew Woodward has stated they have any indication that this was true, and it seems likely that Woodward was beginning to confuse reality. “He did mention a couple of times that he had cancer and he might as well just die,” recalls Brian Patno, “I’m not an expert at it, but he was not in his right mind at the time.”

Patno, who was in charge of Woodward during the ambulance ride, and who remained with him until he was airlifted to Dartmouth Hitchcock Hospital, explains that Woodward “ranted” about the assassination of Jeb Bush.

“The CIA killed McGovern,” recalls Brian Patno, “The CIA killed Jeb Bush- Florida. We said, well Jeb Bush isn’t dead yet, and he said the other Jeb Bush. And as we went on he obviously was starting to get in more pain and stuff and he was, I think destabilizing a little bit. He asked us to apologize to the police officers. He says he doesn’t blame them for what they did, that... it wasn’t their fault. He feels bad for them.”

It also seems plausible that Woodward, his own worst fears now having come true, was attempting to placate the people he perceived as his tormentors. Perhaps Woodward, feeling ultimately vulnerable, became frightened into saying what he guessed they wanted to hear.

Regardless of Woodward's state of mind after the shooting, any statements made while in custody were made without having been read his Miranda rights.

It is unfortunate, in any compassionate consideration of Woodward's final hours, that Brian Patno's statement reveals a number of places where he, the chief EMT in charge of Woodward, was harsh and unsympathetic to his patient.

"He said 'why did they do this?'" recalls Patno, "and you know, we told him, you walked into a church with a knife in your hand, threatening them, what did you expect."

Officer John Freschette, who rode in the ambulance, states that when Woodward told Patno his stomach hurt, Patno said "It should hurt, you have been shot."

Patno also relates that when Woodward said, "that he wanted to get shot and that's why he did this ..." that Patno replied, "Well, you got your wish."

As Woodward desperately attempted to express himself, Patno apparently found his efforts both inconvenient and humorous. "We just had to tell him to shut up..." Patno says, and adds that he found it "comical" that Woodward believed Jeb Bush had been assassinated.

Woodward tried to communicate his last wish to Patno, who succinctly refused it. "And he asked me if I would talk to the papers. He says if I die will you go to the newspaper and tell them what I did here and that the CIA is out to kill him and that it's a conspiracy, the government is against him. And I told him, no, I wasn't going to do that."

It is evident that Woodward did not pass his waning moments of consciousness in the company of a person who could offer him any succor. And considering his caregiver's approach, it is plausible that Woodward might have stumbled to get out words that might have earned him a little compassion as his life was failing. Patno says that Woodward stated, "I know, I know. I don't blame them for what they did. They were just doing their job."

In considering the alleged apology, the inconsistency of Woodward's own views at the time must be weighed against the credibility of such a confession. Woodward alternated between taking responsibility for his own shooting, and asking "why did they do this?" He declared his absolution of the shooters one moment, and called his death "assassination" at another. "He was rambling on the whole time. He definitely was not there mentally when we were working on him. I mean, he was rambling on not making any sense whatsoever," says Patno.

REPORTS FILLED OUT IN TANDEM AT BPD

The eighteen eyewitnesses from the congregation handed in written statements on December 2. All but three of them were interviewed by police detectives before their departure from the church that day. The remaining three witnesses were interviewed the following day.

Polly Wilson relates: "We did not exchange, at the advice of someone who had been through a traumatic experience, we did not discuss anything as a group. We sat down and wrote our impressions, all of us, before we said anything to each other. I didn't even talk to my husband or he to me about our impressions until after we had written our statements."

The EMTs did not finish submitting their statements until December 21st.

The police officers were directed to return to the station before being asked to fill out statements on December 2. There, they filled out written reports in the same room, in an atmosphere that can only be described as careless.

When he was interviewed on December 3, Terrence Parker explained the circumstances of the writing of the reports:

"Our Deputy Chief asked us to come back and just take a few, take an hour or so and just relax and jot down some notes and stuff like that of what happened, but basically relax and kind of chill out. ... There were other officers coming in and out and the other two officers were there."

"Were they writing their report also?" Parker was asked.

"Actually, (Officer Davies) was working on an accident report... And Officer Marshall was in the room for a few minutes, and he left for a little bit and came back, so um, we were instructed not to talk to each other about it."

Parker says that he "really didn't" talk to the other officers about the shooting while filling out his report, but that he had had conversations with them in reference to the shooting in the intervening 24 hours, prior to his verbal interview.

Officer Holbrook recalls, "Deputy Chief Martin said to go back to the station and just basically chill out for an hour and if I wanted to make some notes during that time I could, and to basically go back and chill out for an hour... I didn't write up the report when I was back here, it was after John had come back and said that he had us to (too low to hear) report before (inaudible) he went, and I did."

Holbrook estimates that "a couple of hours" lapsed before he filled out his report, and that "Officer Parker was writing his up, and I'm not sure if Officer Davies was writing his up, but Officer Parker was."

Officer Holbrook was asked "Did you guys discuss this with each other and talk about what happened?"

"No, because I remember John Martin telling us when he left he didn't want us to discuss it."

Officer Davies was asked, "Where did you write your statement out?"
"In the Patrol Area of the Brattleboro Police Department," he replied.

"Do you know where Officer Parker and Officer Holbrook wrote out their statements?" Davies was asked.

"I believe they did it in the same proximity at the same time in the patrol area of the police department."

"So all three of you were writing your statements in the same area?"

“Yes, sir.”

“Was there any conversation between you guys in reference to how things happened?”

“We were instructed by Deputy Chief Martin at the scene not to discuss the matter with each other and that we were to wait for somebody to come back and talk to us.”

“As you were typing out your reports was there any conversation between the three of you as to what happened?”

“Not in regards to the incident. I mean, we had normal police, you know, tease each other, do those kinds of things that you normally do.”

Upon leaving the “chilled out”, “teasing” police officers unsupervised, in the same room, to fill out their official reports, Deputy Chief Martin went on a three day vacation.

AFTERWARD

This concludes Justice For Woody’s narrative of the events of December 2. All of the evidence included in this discussion was drawn directly from the evidence packet provided by the office of Vermont Attorney General William Sorrell.

Since Sorrell’s office has released no autopsy or medical information about Robert Woodward’s death, we cannot address decisions made regarding his treatment after he left the All Souls Church. All we can say about Woody’s final hours is that he was taken to the Brattleboro Memorial Hospital at 11 am, then airlifted to Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center, in Lebanon, NH, where he died, in surgery, at 2 pm.

Many subsequent events have deepened the sense of injustice evoked by this shooting, but this narrative concludes with the close of events on December 2.